

CITY OF REDMOND TRAILS COMMISSION

MINUTES — January 26, 2005 Old Redmond Schoolhouse Community Center

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Gary Smith, Julie Barnfather, Kris Colt, Sue Chenault, Glenn Eades, Peter McDonald

ABSENT: Ken Bechmann; youth advocate Morgan Hargraves

CITY STAFF: Tim Cox, Manager of Parks Planning; Pam Maybee, Recording Secretary

AUDIENCE: None

Note: Bold/italic text denotes Staff and Commissioner follow-up resulting from this meeting.

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gary Smith called to order the regular meeting of the Redmond Trails Commission (RTC) at 7:05 p.m. at the Old Redmond Schoolhouse Community Center (ORSCC).

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER

Smith introduced RTC's newest Commissioner, Peter McDonald, who replaced past Commissioner Maureen McCoy. McDonald gave a brief bio of his interests and trail usage. He noted he saw the advertisement for the Commissioner position on RCTV.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion for approval of December 1, 2004 RTC minutes as submitted by: Commissioner Colt

Second by: Commissioner Barnfather

Motion carried: Unanimous 6-0

IV. ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE/HANDOUTS

A. Language of Conservation

Cox referenced the memo from Public Opinion Strategies and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates, who, on behalf of Trust for Public Lands conducted research on the language of conservation. At the last two Redmond Park Board (RPB) meetings, survey language for the proposed park bond was discussed, specifically questions regarding clean water and conservation (since parks would promote both).

- Successful language was developed for the proposed park bond survey by Trust for Public Lands. They have an 82% success rate in bond passage.
- The language was review by the Parks Director, the Mayor, and RPB. Questions on the survey were modified only slightly.
- The 15-minute telephone survey is scheduled to begin in February.
- The survey will ascertain how receptive and willing taxpayers are to a funding mechanism (e.g., bond), as well as what taxpayers would like to see the City do with the money.
- From a previous survey, trails were a priority for taxpayers.
- Survey results will be sometime in early March 2005.

Eades volunteered to attend the RPB meeting and report results to RTC. Cox surmised that at their February meeting, RPB will concur to proceed with the survey; results may be in by their March meeting.

V. DISCUSSION AND REPORTS

A. Nicholls Trail Negotiation

Cox reported it is the City's objective to retain use of the Nicholls' trail in perpetuity. Staff met with the Nicholls' family representative and discussed these issues:

- The Nicholls are receptive to think in terms of longer than five years.
- Benefits to the Nicholls could be King County tax breaks for recreational use property, as well as tax breaks for partial or whole gifted donations.
- The City is talking with the Nicholls about a long-term gift or purchase of the trail in perpetuity.
- While negotiations continue over the year, a no-cost one-year extension would be signed and added to the current 5-year agreement due to expire in spring 2005.

- Nicholls family would like an access trail to the Juel property from their property. The City is looking at this connection.

Barnfather reported King County has granted its first successful PBRs property, a tax break given to a property of similar trail use.

B. City Transportation Master Plan (TMP)

Cox presented a draft copy of selected chapters of the TMP including those portions relating to non-motorized transportation.

Commissioners agreed to review and discuss the draft at the February RTC meeting.

Commissioners reviewed the handout of the "Primary & Secondary Bike Corridors," as well as the "TMP Schedule: Proposed City Council and Planning Commission Review Schedule."

- A community open house was held January 20, and would be followed by a number of City Council study sessions, included jointly with the Planning Commission.
- Workshops follow, leading to the TMP adoption May 12, 2005.
- The PBAC (Pedestrian-Bicycle Advisory Committee) has been involved with the Plan formation, and is pleased with the outcome, as well as its support of long range goals.
- Staff, Planning Commission, and City Council are supportive of the bicycle-pedestrian goals.
- Public hearing at the Planning Commission will be 2/23/05 before the RTC February meeting; however, Commissioners will have a chance to weigh in their ideas at the March workshops, and also may attend open houses and study sessions.

Barnfather would like RTC to give input as to whether or not a sidewalk or a trail would work in a given setting or area. She suggested inviting a staff person from Public Works to discuss these types of issues. Cox noted that Kurt Seemanns, PW, is willing to come to address the TMP draft and answer questions. ***Commissioners concurred Seemanns be invited to the February meeting; Cox will follow up.***

The TMP document speaks of transportation language (i.e., bike/pedestrians), not trails as a transportation component—it is a bicycle/pedestrian plan. Cox suggested that by strengthening trail connections via sidewalks, trails could become a focus in the Plan.

Smith showed a memo of a proposal from the Mayor to City Council regarding connectors.

- City Council's objective is to identify 10 new connectors using sidewalks, trails, and other pathways by 2006-07.
- Commissioners could take action on this timely request, e.g., each Commissioner could choose a neighborhood that has a trail aspect to it.
- Certain sidewalks could be viewed as trails if addressed early in the plan process of development design.

RPB is currently reviewing the park system by neighborhood; RTC could attach soft surface considerations to this endeavor.

- Commissioners could identify trails (soft surface) designated to be built, and then come up with a strategy (so they can either be built or taken off the list).
- Suggested strategy: When a property comes on the market that has a trail easement in it, e.g., backs up to the PSE trail, buy the single family property, develop the trail easement, and sell the property back.

For the record, Commissioners requested the following updates:

- Bridle Crest Trail segment from 148th to 140th: ***Staff will Identify what section is Redmond, King County, or Bellevue, specifically, who is maintaining the King County section.***
- "Missing link" from Farrel-McWhirter to the Watershed: ***Chenault will contact Robert Foxworthy at King County for an update. Cox will email her the number.***

C. Soft Surface Trail Plan

Cox reported that as RPB analyzes parks, the objective is to have RTC follow with prioritizing trails for construction. He noted many areas are lacking soft surface trails, as well as signage and identification of needs. Safety issues need to be identified and fixed. Cox highlighted certain developments with trail potential to be built within them, where the developer should be required to put in trails. He asked Commissioners to prioritize trails for construction and suggested the following:

- Direct a volunteer effort with the \$25,000 seed money.
- Be focused to use the money successfully the first time, so the money would likely be there again.
- Demonstrate that trails can be built.
- Demonstrate that RTC can do more, and thereby warrant future dollars dedicated to the effort.
- Prioritize trails for development.

Cox reported the Redmond Park Board (RPB) is conducting a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of nine neighborhoods. They have just completed Grass Lawn Park neighborhood, with follow-up occurring now. Cox suggested RTC could do a similar approach to make trails happen

Commissioner feedback:

- Look at developments going in right now and speak to the project for trails within them. (McDonald)
- Get the trail on the map before the development, so the developer has to build it as part of the City's trails plan. (Eades)
- Do both neighborhood analysis and choose trails, too. (Barnfather)
- Be at initial meetings with staff to see how much is there to promote and/or prioritize.

Cox will inform Commissioners when the Planning Department will have their neighborhood meetings.

Commissioners concurred to review trails neighborhood by neighborhood, as well as identify specific trails.

- Generate best policies, especially prior to CAC (Citizen Advisory Committee) meetings.
- Ensure (i.e., "watch dog") that policies are followed through by developers.
- Require a timeline for CAC meetings for North Redmond and Education Hill. ***Cox will follow up by procuring a timeline and reporting next month.***

Cox will bring to the next RTC meeting a further/focused analysis of trails at Grass Lawn. Commissioners will review the SWOT handout and evaluate if any thing is missing.

Next month's agenda, Commissioners will choose a project to analyze, e.g., Valley View trail or spot improvements on the Bridle Crest Trail, etc. Cox will make a brief list for Commissioners to prioritize, e.g., neighborhood parks with perimeter trails, connections, etc..

D. Trail at Bear Creek Park

Cox reported on the trail at Bear Creek Park:

- Reed Middleton is the consultant for the trail design at Bear Creek Park.

- There are two trails north of Redmond Way: a hard surface trail, mostly 12-foot wide, and a parallel soft surface trail with a bulb-out interpretive section.
- Background designs are 30% completed as of 1/25/05.
- Target is to construct this summer, if permit process allows.
- IAC grants will help the City purchase the last two missing link properties to north Avondale Road.
- After purchase, the City will apply for the TEA-21 grant to construct the trail north.
- A possibility exists of protecting and remedying the trail under Union Hill Road from Bear Creek, however, several challenges with permitting exist.

E. Maintenance and Operations Reporting

Cox asked Commissioners how often they would like Park Operations staff to bring updates; he suggested biannually, i.e., spring, before projects, and fall, to follow up. ***Commissioners discussed and agreed on once per year for status update, then possibly once per year should they have questions on an issue.***

F. Phase I West Lake Sammamish Trail

Eades proposed a logical trail extension along the West Lake Sammamish Parkway in the Phase II road widening project.

- The hard surface trail would provide a link to Idylwood Park.
- Public Works states, however, that space is limited.
- Eades would pursue the trail extension, but requested Commissioners support at the appropriate time.
- Include this trail on a priority list.
- The trail could be a part of the Overlake neighborhood SWOT.

G. East Lake Sammamish Update

Barnfather reported information from a notice by the hearing examiner on the East Lake Sammamish trail:

- On January 5, 2005, the US District Court for Western District of Washington issued an order that pre-empted portions of the Sammamish code with respect to trail development on a rail bed.
- State and local governments have the right to impose regulations, but not to prohibit trail construction on a railroad right-of-way.
- Consequently, the City of Sammamish cannot prohibit building the trail on the East Lake Sammamish railroad bed.

H. Joint Bike-Ped/RTC Meeting

Cox asked Commissioners if they would like to meet with the PBAC to cooperatively work on projects. Bike-Ped dollars for a PSE trail from Willows to 132nd were left from last year, but were frozen until after budget approval. The Public Works Director says to proceed.

Eades noted the PBAC is now focused on the TMP. RTC would consider meeting jointly if there was a project they could jointly advocate.

I. PI Newspaper Story: Sammamish River

Smith reported that Peter Holt, Natural Resources staff, asked for Commissioners' input for a news article on the restored Sammamish River habitat sites. Commissioners found them favorable and attractive.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Smith at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Recording Secretary, Pam Maybee

Audiotapes of regular Trails Commission meetings are available at the Parks and Recreation Office at (425) 556-2311.

**THE NEXT REDMOND TRAILS COMMISSION MEETING:
Wednesday, February 23, 2005
Old Redmond Schoolhouse Community Center
7:00 p.m.**